

1 March 1973

BRIEFING ON CHILE ELECTIONS

in the 1958 elections in which Marxist Socialist Salvador Allende polled a surprising 30% of the total votes cast. This showing put Allende within 33,000 votes of winning the election in what had been a four-way race.

This caused the policymakers in Washington to focus on electoral trends in Chile for 1964.

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Despite Frei's progress in obtaining grass roots exposure to the electorate, it was clear by late 1963 that the principal democratic candidate for the presidential election would be Senator Julio Duran supported by a coalition of centrist and rightist parties known as the Democratic Front.

Democratic Front.

In March 1964, however, [REDACTED] the Democratic Front had fallen into a state of disarray. This meant Duran was not likely to win the 1964 election and Allende had indeed become the front runner.

The prospect of an Allende victory in September 1964 did not appeal to the Washington policymakers.

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The September 1964 election proved to be an impressive triumph for Frei who won 56.1% of the vote as against 38.9% for Allende and 5% for Duran. The size of Frei's margin surprised nearly all Chilean political observers.

A page with 12 horizontal black redaction bars of varying lengths. The bars are positioned in a staggered pattern, with some being longer and others shorter, creating a visual texture across the page. The redaction bars are solid black and appear to be hand-drawn or heavily processed to obscure the original content.

an authorization for an expenditure of \$175,000 was obtained in February 1965 to underwrite political support to selected candidates in the March 1965 congressional elections. The program assisted 29 moderate candidates, who were representative of a cross-section of Chilean political life and were considered to be involved in tight races against far leftist candidates. The March 1965 election results proved that President Frei's great popularity had carried over into the congressional elections

since moderate (particularly PDC) candidates scored impressive victories in a number of close races. In retrospect, however, it appears that the pro-PDC climate which prevailed in Chile after Frei's 1964 election was such that the limited U.S. Government involvement in the congressional elections was not a significant factor in the outcome of these elections.

The Radical Party by early 1967 was moving into an increasingly close alliance with the Communists. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

As of early 1968, it was clear that President Frei and his Christian Democratic Party (PDC) had lost much of their previous popular support. The PDC was also troubled by internal dissension between its left wing faction and the more moderate group led by President Frei. At the same time the Communist Party of Chile was launching a program designed to unite as many leftist and left-of-center groups as possible in preparation for the 1970 presidential elections.

In view of the increasingly uncertain political outlook in Chile, \$350,000 was authorized by Washington in July 1968 for use in the March 1969 congressional elections. The objective of this effort was to strengthen Chile's moderate political forces in anticipation of the 1970 presidential

election. This program consisted of

- 1) providing financial support to selected candidates in the non-Marxist parties;
- 2) supporting a splinter Socialist Party (Popular Socialist Union--USP) in order to attract votes away from Salvador Allende's own Socialist Party;
- 3) carrying out propaganda activities against the Marxist left; and,
- 4) assisting independent groups in support of democratic candidates.

The March 1969 election results showed that this limited program was effective. Ten of the twelve congressional candidates selected for support won their races, including a victory in one Senate race where a leftist victory in the pre-election period had been considered almost a certainty. The covert support provided to the dissident Socialist group was particularly worthwhile, because its 52,000 votes deprived Allende's own Socialist Party of a minimum of seven congressional seats all of which were won by moderate candidates. As a result, the regular Socialists ended up with only 19 congressional seats instead of the 26-30 they could have won. In summary, therefore, it can be said that CIA's election activities in 1969 made a limited, but significant, contribution to the congressional strength of the anti-Allende forces.

After the March 1969 congressional elections in Chile, there was a consensus in the U.S. Government that CIA should not support either of the non-Marxist presidential candidates in the 1970 Chilean elections, because there was little to choose between them. There was agreement, however, that the election of Allende would be detrimental to U.S. foreign policy interests.

As a result, it was agreed that CIA would undertake spoiling operations to take the uncommitted vote away from the Popular Unity (UP) party, a coalition of leftist parties supporting Allende and centered around the Communist Party of Chile and the Socialist Party. It was hoped in this manner to reduce the threat of a presidential victory by Allende.

The presidential race in 1970 was between the following three candidates:

Salvador Allende	Socialist head of the Popular Unity (UP) coalition of Communists, Socialists, Radicals and other minor groups running on a party platform which emphasized converting Chile to a Socialist State.
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Jorge Alessandri

Independent and former President

(1958-64) who was supported by the

conservative National Party (PN), the

Democratic Radicals and independent

voters.

Radomiro Tomic

Christian Democrat, running on a

ticket of intensification of the "revol-

ution in liberty" theme begun by

President Frei in 1964.

In March 1970 CIA initiated its political action operation in Chile

[REDACTED] authorized to conduct propaganda operations against the

UP [REDACTED]

In June 1970, three months before the elections, the American Ambassador in Chile, Mr. Korry, recommended an expansion of the CIA political action program. This recommendation was based on the continued decline of the campaign of Jorge Alessandri, the stagnation of the campaign of Radomiro Tomic, and the gathering strength of Allende as shown by polls reflecting a trend that indicated Allende could be elected.

As a result, in July 1970 a decision was made to spend [REDACTED] in anti-Allende activities. At the same time a campaign was launched [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] case no presidential candidate received a clear majority in the 4 September 1970 popular elections and the Chilean Congress had to decide the presidency on 24 October 1970 in a run-off between the two leading campaign contestants (most probably Alessandri and Allende).

The elections in September 1970 resulted in a slight Allende plurality (36.3%) over Alessandri (34.9%). During the intervening period prior to the October run-off congressional vote, CIA efforts, backed with stand-by authorizations totalling [REDACTED] were made to interest the Christian Democrats and the Allesandri forces in a formula to elect Alessandri in the congressional run-off and then have Alessandri resign. This ploy, if successful, would have required new elections in which President Frei would again be eligible to run and would presumably have won readily over Allende. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] It was hoped that [REDACTED] developments in Chile would act as a further pressure on Frei and his supporters to block Allende in Congress. The effort failed because Frei and his followers opted not to [REDACTED]

thwart Allende's swearing in as President via legalistic and legislative mancuvers. As a result the stand-by funds were never spent.

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In the April 1971 municipal elections the UP was kept from reaching 50% of the vote while the opposition parties, though obtaining slightly fewer votes (48%), gained confidence in their ability to continue to resist efforts of the Allende government to browbeat the opposition. The municipal election probably represented the high water mark for Allende and the UP in terms of popular support.

Between July 1971 and July 1972, there were three by-elections to fill four vacancies in the legislature caused by the death of congressmen.

[REDACTED] The opposition parties, working in unaccustomed and sometimes difficult harmony, were able to win three of the four races.

This gave them hope that in the critical congressional elections of March 1973 at mid-term in the Allende administration, they could defeat the Allende forces if the elections were kept honest. As the March 1973 elections became a reality it was clear that the parties wanted to oppose Allende but their traditional sources of financing had dried up due to administrative chaos, inflation, shortages and uncertainty which had put great financial pressure on the middle classes and private enterprise. In effect, the Allende government was slowly strangling the opposition parties economically, although Allende was committed to allowing the political opposition to continue.

As a result of this situation, in November 1971, [REDACTED] was allocated to provide support to the opposition parties [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] In October 1972 an additional [REDACTED] was granted by the 40 Committee to carry the opposition parties [REDACTED]

through the March 1973 congressional elections.

Concurrently with covert financing of the opposition political parties, a decision was made to give [redacted] Chilean private interest organizations [redacted]

The purpose of such support was to harness the energies of these groups to get out the vote for opposition candidates in the March 1973 congressional elections.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The net result of this effort is that in the 4 March 1973 elections the opposition polled 54.7 percent of the 3.6 million votes cast. The Allende leftist coalition obtained 43.3 percent of the votes cast. This means that in the new Senate the opposition controls 30 of the 50 seats. In the House of Deputies the opposition controls 87 seats, and Allende's coalition has 63 seats. In brief, Allende has a minority mandate to govern. This means that the actions undertaken by CIA in the 1973 elections have made a contribution to slowing down the Socialization of Chile. This is the policy objective that CIA was asked to pursue, and that is what we have done.